

8 June 1949

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR OPERATIONS

Transliteration of Foreign Languages

- References:
- A. Memo from AD/OO to Chief, ICAPS and the Assistant Directors for OCD, ORE and OSO, dated 25 Oct 1948, subject: "Transliteration and Standardization of Spelling of Foreign Personal Names."
 - B. Memo from DAD/OSO to AD/OO dated 25 Oct 1948, same subject.
 - C. Memo from Chief, ICAPS to AD/OO dated 27 Oct 1948, same subject.
 - D. Memo from AD/ORE to AD/OO dated 28 Oct 1948, same subject.
 - E. Memo from AD/OCD to AD/OO dated 28 Oct 1948, same subject.

1. Reference A proposed that a CIA committee be formed of representatives of the various offices concerned with the problem of transliteration especially insofar as it pertained to foreign personal names.

2. In view of the favorable response to this proposal as contained in References B to E, a CIA Transliteration Committee was formed of representatives from ICAPS, ORE, OCD and OO. Acting Chief, FDB was elected Chairman of this Committee which has held meetings on this subject as it related to the Slavic languages and Chinese, Japanese and Korean.

3. To facilitate coordination with the IAC agencies in this matter, working committees were formed for related languages or language groups and IAC participation in the deliberations and findings of these working committees was obtained through Chief, ICAPS.

4. Due to the urgent need for a solution to this problem as it relates to Russian and Korean, the following recommendations of the Committee covering the Slavic languages and the ideographic Far Eastern languages are presented at this time. These are in consonance with the current BGN system for geographical names on languages for which the Board has a system.

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5. The Committee recommends the following transliteration procedures be adopted by CIA not only for personal names but for all transliteration purposes:

- a. For the Russian language, the BGN system.
- b. For Ukrainian and Belorussian, the system drawn up by the Committee.
- c. For Bulgarian, the BGN system.
- d. For Serbian, the Creatian alphabet.
- e. For Chinese, the Wade-Giles system. (This is a routine recommendation, as this system is presently used by all government offices).
- f. For Japanese, the Hepburn system. (This is also routine, as this system was used during the war by all agencies and is well established).
- g. For Korean, the Mc Cune-Reischauer system.

It is further recommended:

- a. That, inasmuch as IAC representatives participated in the working committees, the IAC agencies be approached with a view toward their formal adoption of the systems recommended above.
- b. That a directive be issued to all CIA Offices to employ the systems recommended above, if approved.
- c. That the system tables be prepared in multiple copies for dissemination to each person in CIA concerned with transliteration for any purpose.

/s/ J.J. BAGNALL,
Chairman,
CIA Transliteration Committee

cc: ICAPS
ORE
OCD

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